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Rural Reconstruction in Ireland: A Record of Cooperative Organization, by Lionel Smith-Gordon, M.A. (Oxon), Assistant Secretary, Irish Agricultural Organization Society, and Laurence C. Staples, A.M., sometime Parker Traveling Fellow, Harvard University, with Preface by George W. Russell ("A.E"). New Haven: The Yale University Press, 1919. Pp. 301.

Mr. George W. Russell, than whom no man is more competent to speak on the subject of the coöperative agricultural movement in Ireland, says in his Preface that, "This volume contains the most complete and accurate history of a movement which has come to be of the highest importance to Ireland". Without questioning, for a moment, the good faith or the accuracy of Mr. Russell's statement in regard to the character of the volume, we may be permitted to ask whether any work purporting to treat of the history of the agricultural movement in Ireland can be called accurate or complete which, apparently of set purpose, slurs over the history of the Land Agitation in Ireland. It is no derogation of the excellence of the work accomplished by Sir Horace Plunkett and his active and enthusiastic colleagues at Plunkett House to venture the assertion that without the reforms brought about by Mr. Parnell there could have been no Irish Agricultural Organization Society. The authors are aware of this fact for they admit that "The application of a reasonable system of land tenure was undoubtedly essential to the development of agriculture". This reasonable system of land tenure had its inception in the Land Acts of Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone, himself, is our witness that his reforms were due to the agitation carried on under the able direction of Mr. Parnell and the politicians whom the apologists of the coöperative movement affect to despise. Speaking on this subject, Mr. Gladstone said: "I must make one admission, and that is, that without the Land League the Acts of 1881 would not at this moment be on the statute books".

Any survey of the efforts to revive the economic life of Ireland must take into account the deplorable political conditions which had brought about the stagnation of work and effort and had choked the industrial efficiency of the entire population. The work which Sir Horace Plunkett set out to accomplish would have been meaningless and futile from its beginning if the Land League had not prepared the ground. It is on the general

background of the political progress in Ireland that the work of Rural Reconstruction becomes intelligible. It may happen that, since Sir Horace Plunkett has become a convert to the views and the projects of Mr. Parnell, he may not see fit in the future to exclude all reference to the results achieved in the field of politics. It may even happen that Sir Horace will be logical enough to follow the light which has been vouchsafed to him and that he will accept the program of the Sinn Fein Party as the surest means of making Coöperation and Reconstruction really effective and permanent.

One other objection which may be taken to this otherwise fair and honest effort to present an account of the labors of a band of enlightened workers, is that it contains too many of the shop-worn catch-words of the ascendancy party in Ireland. There are frequent references to the *North* of Ireland and to the *South* of Ireland, to the differences of religion, to the evil effects of political agitation, to the predominant part played in Irish life by the "gombeen men" (the local money-lenders), and throughout the book there is a tendency to exalt the virtues of English statesmen in their dealings with the Irish. To anybody who has made a study of the recent history of Ireland, or to any person who knows the actual conditions in Ireland, all these little euphemisms for covering the brutal efforts to exterminate the Irish people or to hold them in a condition of perpetual serfdom tend to raise the question whether the writers have made an independent investigation or whether they are merely the mouth-pieces of a class that desires to hang on to what it has and to exclude the majority of the people of the island from elementary justice. It is distressing, to say the least, to find in such a book as this the statement that Sir Horace Plunkett was hampered in his work by his antecedents. "How a person of his politics and religion and class could be unselfishly interested in the welfare of Ireland and the Irish peasantry was beyond comprehension". Not beyond the comprehension of the most ordinary peasant in Ireland, but beyond the comprehension of the class of jobbers and landlords and Junkers who had been bleeding the peasants for generations. The authors, before attempting to make their book serve as a means of informing the public on a subject of interest to all the world, should have made them-

selves acquainted with the most elementary things in the psychology and the politics of Ireland.

It has been necessary, perhaps, to advert to these shortcomings in a work which fills a very necessary place in the mass of literature which has been pouring from the press on the subject of Ireland in the last two years. As the authors are no doubt aware, the enemies of Ireland have taken this coöperative movement, for which they have so much justifiable admiration, as an argument against allowing to the Irish people a larger share in the management of their affairs. There are some benighted Americans, whose ill-placed affection for England has led them to see in the coöperative efforts of Irish farmers an indication that something was going on that could not attract the support of Americans. This exposition of the work of such men as George W. Russell ought to be reassuring and ought to act as a new source of sympathy for all those who are striving to deal with evils which had their source in the selfish policy of a class who were fastened on Ireland in circumstances which have passed away everywhere except under the government of England.

P. J. HEALY, D.D.

The Italian Emigration of Our Times. By Robert F. Foerster, Ph.D. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

A distinct contribution to our knowledge of Italian emigration in its causes and consequences is the remarkable work: "Italian Emigration of our Times" by Professor Robert F. Foerster, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Social Ethics in Harvard University. It were difficult indeed to find a more readable survey of a subject which in the hands of a routine statistician or dry-as-dust economist might easily have become a dreary waste of figures assembled and assorted with the imagination of an automaton. Professor Foerster foresaw this perilous temptation as is evident from these words of the preface: "A book, Walt Whitman has said, should 'go as lightly as the bird flies in the air or a fish swims in the sea'. I have made mine carry much luggage, footnotes apologetic or bibliographical". We would recommend this work to all who desire to have a sober,